

REMARKS

As discussed below, the claims have been restricted to a watercraft or a method of providing furnishings in a watercraft. The description has been amended accordingly to omit references, in the context of the invention, to structures other than watercraft. No new matter has been added.

The independent claims 13 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 102 over Harsia et al. Claim 18 has been rejected under 35 USC 103 over Harsia et al in view of Comm, and claim 19 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 over Harsia et al in view of Klaus. Claims 13-24 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 25-43.

The new independent claims 25 and 31 are directed to a watercraft whereas the independent claim 38 is directed to a method for providing furnishings in a watercraft. Applicant submits that the invention as defined in claims 25, 31 and 38 is not disclosed or suggested by the prior art.

Claim 25 is directed to a watercraft comprising a board formed with an opening of width W, a deck construction provided with first and second support structures spaced apart longitudinally of the board at a distance D, and a plurality of prefabricated room units to be installed on the deck construction between the first and second support structures. The invention is particularly applicable to installation of passenger cabins in a cruise ship, in which case the board may be, for example, the outboard of a superstructure or an interior board surrounding an open inner section, i.e. a promenade area, of the cruise ship.

As set forth in claim 25, the width W of the opening in the board is larger than the width of each of the plurality of room units and smaller than the total width of the plurality of room units. As further set forth in claim 25, the distance D between the support structures is not greater than the total width of the plurality of room units. During installation of the room units, a first of the room units can be installed in the watercraft through the opening in the board into a preliminary position on the deck construction and can then be moved longitudinally of the board to a predetermined final position substantially abutting the first support structure. A second of the plurality of room units can then be installed in the watercraft through the opening into a predetermined position on the deck

construction, adjacent the first room unit. In the predetermined position of each room unit, an exterior side portion of the room unit forms a part of the outboard of the watercraft and/or an interior side portion of the room unit forms a part of an interior board of the watercraft.

Claim 31 is similar to claim 25 except that claim 31 is positively limited to the first and second room units being located at the respective predetermined positions on the deck construction.

Claim 38 is directed to a method including the steps discussed in connection with claim 25.

Harsia et al discloses a ship construction in which a three-dimensional lattice work consisting of braced girders 3, 3', 4 and 5 constructed above the top-most deck 1 of the ship's hull. The lattice work defines multiple cells and one cabin unit is installed in each cell. As described with reference to FIG. 2, the cabin units are installed by inserting them horizontally into the cells of the lattice work. Harsia et al does not disclose or suggest that one cabin unit should be installed in its cell to a preliminary position and then moved longitudinally of a board of the ship (such as the central bulkhead 2) to a final position or that a second cabin unit should be installed in the same cell as the first cabin unit, through the same opening in the outboard of the ship.

Further, although claim 25 does not require that the decking be horizontally continuous over the entire area between the first and second support structures, applicant submits that the horizontal girders 4 and 5 do not constitute a deck construction within the meaning of claim 25. Thus, it is implicit in claim 25 that the deck construction be able to support the first room unit both at its preliminary position and at its predetermined final position whereas it is clear that the lattice work of Harsia et al defines only a single position in which the cabin unit can be supported by the lattice work in its own cell.

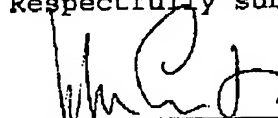
The examiner relies on Comm as disclosing the seals recited in claim 18. The new claim 25 does not recite seals and accordingly applicant submits that Comm is not relevant to claim 25. For similar reasons, applicant submits that Klaus is not relevant to claim 25.

In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the invention as defined in claim 25 is not disclosed or suggested by Harsia et al,

Comm and Klaus, whether taken singly or in combination. Therefore, claim 25 is patentable and it follows that the dependent claims 26-30 also are patentable.

The arguments presented above in support of claim 25 are applicable also to claims 31 and 38. Applicant therefore submits that claims 31 and 38 are patentable and it follows that the dependent claims 32-37 and 39-43 also are patentable.

Respectfully submitted,



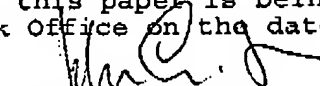
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